

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 167325

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, ECON, OEXC, PORG, NI

SUBJECT: EASUM-SANU CONVERSATION JULY 1 AT NIGERIAN
EMBASSY

FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF EASUM-SANU CONVERSATION JULY 1
AT NIGERIAN EMBASSY:

1. US-NIGERIAN BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. SANU SAID HE HAD
JUST RETURNED FROM PARTICIPATING WITH SIX OTHER "KEY
AMBASSADORS" IN SERIOUS IN-DEPTH REVIEW AND DISCUSSION
IN LAGOS OF NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY. BILATERAL US-NIGERIAN
RELATIONS WERE SPECIFICALLY DISCUSSED AND FOLLOWING KEY
FOREIGN POLICY DETERMINATIONS EMERGED. THERE IS TO BE
"NO CONFRONTATION" OF US BY NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT IN SPITE
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OF CONTINUING DIFFERENCES ON SOUTHERN AFRICA POLICY AND IN

SPITE OF FMG BITTERNESS OVER US VETO OF ANGOLAN UN ADMIS-
SION. IN LAGOS DISCUSSIONS, THERE WERE DIFFERENCES OF VIEW
ON THIS POINT. SANU SAID SOME FMG OFFICIALS WISHED ONCE
AGAIN TO CRITICIZE US IN FASHION REMINISCENT OF OUTBURST
LAST JANUARY ISSUED IN RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER
ON ANGOLA. SANU SAID WISER HEADS, INCLUDING HIS, PREVAILED.
MAJOR CONSIDERATION IN MINDS OF THOSE FAVORING SOFT AP-
PROACH WAS REALIZATION THAT CURRENT US POLICY ENVIRONMENT
NOT CONDUCIVE TO KINDS OF AFRICAN POLICY INITIATIVES THAT
FMG HOPED TO SEE FROM US. FMG DOESN'T BELIEVE THAT THIS IS
PROFITIOUS TIME FOR NEW NIGERIAN INITIATIVES VIS-A-VIS US
AND BY SAME TOKEN WILL BE SKEPTICAL OF DURABILITY AND
RELEVANCE OF ANY INITIATIVES US MIGHT TAKE WITH REGARD TO
NIGERIA. THUS, SANU SAID, PROPOSALS FOR HIGH LEVEL VISITS,
FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD NOT ENCOUNTER ENTHUSIASTIC FMG RESPONSE
UNTIL AFTER NEXT JANUARY. IN SPITE OF RESIDUAL XENOPHOBIA
OF CONTINUING PRESS ATTACKS AGAINST US, EXISTENCE OF WHICH
SANU READILY ACKNOWLEDGED, HE SAID HE WAS PERSONALLY PER-
SUADED THAT THERE WAS AN EXCELLENT CHANCE OF US-NIGERIAN
RELATIONS NOW PROCEEDING ON EVEN KEEL AND MUTUALLY BENE-
FICIAL LEVEL. HE SAID MEA SHARED THIS VIEW.

2. INDIGENIZATION. THERE WAS BRIEF DISCUSSION OF OBASAN-
JO'S JUNE 29 SPEECH. SANU DID NOT YET HAVE COMPLETE TEXT.
HE SAID HE WAS RECEIVING FLOOD OF PHONE CALLS FROM US COM-
PANIES WANTING TO KNOW WHAT THE SPEECH MEANT AND WHETHER
THEY WERE INCLUDED. HE SAID HE HOPED SOON TO HAVE A LIST
OF ALL AFFECTED COMPANIES WHICH HE WOULD PASS TO DEPARTMENT.
HE DID NOT PERSONALLY SEEM ALARMED AT THE IMPLICATIONS OF
EXPANDED INDIGENIZATION ACTIONS, ARGUING THAT MANY COM-
PANIES HAD COMPLIED ONLY COSMETICALLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR NIGERIAN PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT. HE OPINED THAT
ONE RESULT OF NEWLY ANNOUNCED POLICIES WOULD BE INCREASE IN
EXPATRIATE QUOTAS TO ENABLE SOME COMPANIES TO TRAIN
GREATER QUANTITIES OF NIGERIAN STAFF. AMBASSADOR STRESSED
UNFORTUNATE POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS THAT NEWLY ANNOUNCED
ACTIONS MIGHT HAVE ON INVESTORS' VIEW OF NIGERIAN FOREIGN
INVESTMENT CLIMATE, ESPECIALLY WHEN COUPLED WITH APPARENT
DECISION OF FMG TO GET OUT OF OPIC AGREEMENT AND APPARENT
CONTINUING SLOWNESS TO PAY EXIMBANK ARREARAGES.
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3. OPIC AND EXIMBANK. SANU HAD LITTLE TO REPORT CONCERN-
ING HIS HAVING RAISED BOTH THESE QUESTIONS DURING HIS RE-
CENT VISIT TO LAGOS. HE SAID THAT MEA ECONOMIC DIRECTOR
AFOLABI HAD PROMISED TO LOOK INTO BOTH QUESTIONS. EASUM
EXPLAINED THAT THE EXIMBANK LOANS TO NIGERIA AIRWAYS WERE
BACK IN OUR COURT. AS FOR OPIC, HOWEVER, EASUM STRESSED
OUR CONCERN THAT THE FMG THOROUGHLY UNDERSTAND THE VARIOUS

FACILITIES THAT THE OPIC AGREEMENT PROVIDES. EASUM STRESSED THE FULL RANGE OF THESE SERVICES AS COMPARED WITH ICSID, WHICH OFFERS LITTLE MORE THAN AN ARBITRATION PROCEDURE. EASUM GAVE SANU A BRIEFING PAPER PREPARED BY OPIC WHICH SANU PROMISED TO SEND TO AFOLABI.

4. INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES BANK. EASUM NOTED AMBASSADOR CLARK'S ROLE IN NAIROBI IN OPPOSING THE RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A STUDY OF THE IRB PROPOSAL. THE DEPARTMENT HAD PREVIOUSLY RAISED THIS MATTER WITH SANU. SANU SAID HE HAD TALKED WITH CLARK ABOUT IT IN LAGOS. CLARK HAD GIVEN TWO REASONS FOR HIS ACTION. FIRST, THE US PROPOSAL HAD BEEN

POORLY STAFFED AND THEN FOISTED ON THE MEETING WITHOUT ANY BLACK AFRICAN PARTICIPATION. SECOND, NIGERIA DID NOT UNDERSTAND HOW THE PROPOSAL OFFERED ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO WHAT EXISTING INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, PARTICULARLY THE IBRD, ALREADY PROVIDED. NIGERIA FELT THAT, IN GENERAL, PROLIFERATION OF ORGANIZATIONS DOING SOMEWHAT THE SAME KIND OF THING OUGHT TO BE AVOIDED. SANU SAID HE SHARED THIS VIEW.

5. CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY VISIT. SANU SPOKE WARMLY OF THE SUCCESS TO DATE OF THE CDA VISIT AND THANKED THE DEPARTMENT FOR ITS ASSISTANCE. EASUM NOTED THAT THE DISNEY WORLD ENGAGEMENT HAD APPARENTLY FALLEN THROUGH, WITH DISNEY WORLD AUTHORITIES AND THE DEPARTMENT LEFT HOLDING THE BAG. SANU REPLIED SOMEWHAT LAMELY THAT, AFTER ALL, DISNEY WORLD WAS NOT ONE OF THEIR PRIORITIES. FYI: DISNEY WORLD ARRANGEMENTS MADE AT CDA DELEGATION REQUEST. CDA VISIT WRAP-UP BY SEPTTEL. END FYI.

6. RECRUITMENT FOR NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES. SANU CITED
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NIGERIAN INTEREST IN AMERICAN PROFESSORS AND AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL TECHNIQUES AS EXAMPLES OF THE SORT OF ONGOING MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL ACTIVITIES IN WHICH HE STRONGLY BELIEVED AND WHICH HE SAW PROSPERING OVER THE NEAR FUTURE. HE SAID THAT DR. JUBRIL AMINU'S VISIT WAS PROVING PRODUCTIVE, AND THAT HE HAD SIMILARLY HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR THE RECRUITMENT EFFORTS NOW BEING CONDUCTED IN THE US BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR OF JOS UNIVERSITY.

7. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS. EASUM RAISED THE DEPARTMENT'S GROWING CONCERN OVER CONTINUED NIGERIAN RESTRICTIONS ON DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR TRAVEL IN NIGERIA. SANU SAID THAT THIS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE LAGOS MEETING AT MEA AND THAT MEA WANTED VERY MUCH TO RELAX THE RESTRICTIONS. SANU HIMSELF FEARED THE POSSIBILITY OF RECIPROCAL LIMITATIONS

PLACED UPON ACTIVITIES OF NIGERIAN DIPLOMATS ABROAD. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN INFORMED IN LAGOS THAT THE RESTRICTIONS WOULD SOON BE LIFTED, OR AT ANY RATE ALLEVIATED.

8. NIGERIAN PARTICIPATION IN SMITHSONIAN AFRICAN DIASPORA. AT THE REQUEST OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, EASUM PRESSED SANU ON THE MATTER OF CONTINUING FAILURE OF THE FMG TO GIVE FINAL APPROVAL FOR NIGERIAN PARTICIPATION. WITH THE NIGERIAN TROUPE SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE JULY 25, EASUM SAID IT WAS URGENT THAT THE SMITHSONIAN BE ASSURED OF NIGERIAN PARTICIPATION AS SCHEDULED. EASUM REHEARSED LONG HISTORY OF THIS PROJECT, INCLUDING THE USEFUL ROLE OF SANU'S EMBASSY STAFF AND SUCH NIGERIAN OFFICIALS AS ASHIWAJU IN OBTAINING PRELIMINARY NIGERIAN CONCURRENCES. SANU SAID HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT THE NIGERIAN PARTICIPATION WOULD PROVIDE AN IDEAL PRELUDE TO FESTAC AND THAT HE WOULD CABLE HIS VIEWS IMMEDIATELY TO MEA IN SUPPORT OF THE PROJECT.

ROBINSON

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